

April 11, 1953

Dr. H. H. Plough
BMB Division
Atomic Energy Commission
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Dr. Plough:

Thank you for your very considerate letter of April 9, just received.

In fact, we had decided not to seek renewal of our AEC contract, at least for the present. We were diverted from our original radiobiological project by the discovery of a transduction system in *E. coli* K-12, which acts independently and differently from the sexual recombination. Obviously, such a finding was so central to our entire research program that we have had to tend to it immediately, and it may be a good many months before we are in a position to begin to think about resuming the original project. As the transduction work seems to have no special pertinence to the statutory sphere of the AEC, we thought it might be inappropriate to ask for AEC support of it. I am under the impression that AEC policy tends to discourage research support to any one project over extended intervals longer than three years, and for this reason also prefer to postpone an extension until we are again working on the more pertinent project.

The enclosure will doubtless reach you in due course anyhow. As indicated, we are not quite ready to publish these findings, owing to their numerous ramifications that have not yet been cleared up.

I would certainly welcome an opportunity to discuss our findings with you, and would look forward to a visit. Please let us know if there is any prospect of it.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg

Enc: AEC report 3/1/53